PREVIOUSLY IN...

GHOST RIDER DANNY KETCH

DANNY KETCH USED TO BE THE GHOST RIDER. HIS SOUL HOST TO A GHASTLY ENTITY, KETCH WAS A LEATHER-CLAD, CHAIN-ENSHROUDED, FIRE-WREATHED SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE WHOSE POWER WAS SOMETHING TO BEHOLD. BUT ALL HE REALLY WANTED TO DO WAS RID HIMSELF OF HIS CURSE AND LEAD A NORMAL LIFE.

ONLY, HE DIDN'T KNOW HOW MUCH HE'D MISS IT ONCE IT WAS GONE. EVER SINCE THE SPIRIT WAS EXORCISED FROM HIS SOUL, KETCH HAS HAD ONLY ONE THING ON HIS MIND: GETTING IT BACK.

NOW, DANNY'S BEEN GIVEN A TASTE OF THE GHOST RIDER POWER ONCE MORE BY THE MYSTERIOUS MISTER ELEVEN—A CROW WITH TIES TO A HIGHER POWER. ELEVEN EXPLAINS TO KETCH THAT THE GHOST RIDER POWER WAS ORIGINALLY GRANTED BY HEAVEN IN AN ATTEMPT TO CREATE LIVING SPIRIT WEAPONS. AND KETCH IS NOW BEING TASKED BY HEAVEN TO EXTERMINATE THE ONE WHO'S BEEN DESTROYING HOSTS AND STEALING THEIR POWERS FOR HIMSELF: VERMINUS REX. WITH INFORMATION FROM A FALLEN RIDER AND FULLY RESTORED POWER COURSING THROUGH HIS BODY, DANNY KETCH RETURNS TO THE FRAY AS GHOST RIDER ONCE MORE!

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WHEN YOU COME RIGHT DOWN TO IT, HE'S A GOOD KID.
SURE--HE'S A JUNKIE. SURE, HE'S SO TANGLED IN HIS DAMN FLAWS HE'S PRACTICALLY A KNOT...
BUT EVEN SO... IT FEELS BAD, Y'KNOW?
LEAVING HIM.
BUT... IT AIN'T MY DECISION. I GOTTA FOLLOW THE SCRIPT.
AH.
CAWD
THERE YOU ARE.

THWUK
W--
NO!
BASTARD!
BAAAAAAAA
BASTARD!

GHOST RIDER: ADDICT

PART 5: CHASE THE DRAGON

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VVVORB
NOK NOK NOK!
OH, FER GODS*SAKES*... JUST A SODDIN' *MINUTE*...
IF THAT'S THE *JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES*, THERE'S GONNA BE BLOODY *TR*--
AAAAAA

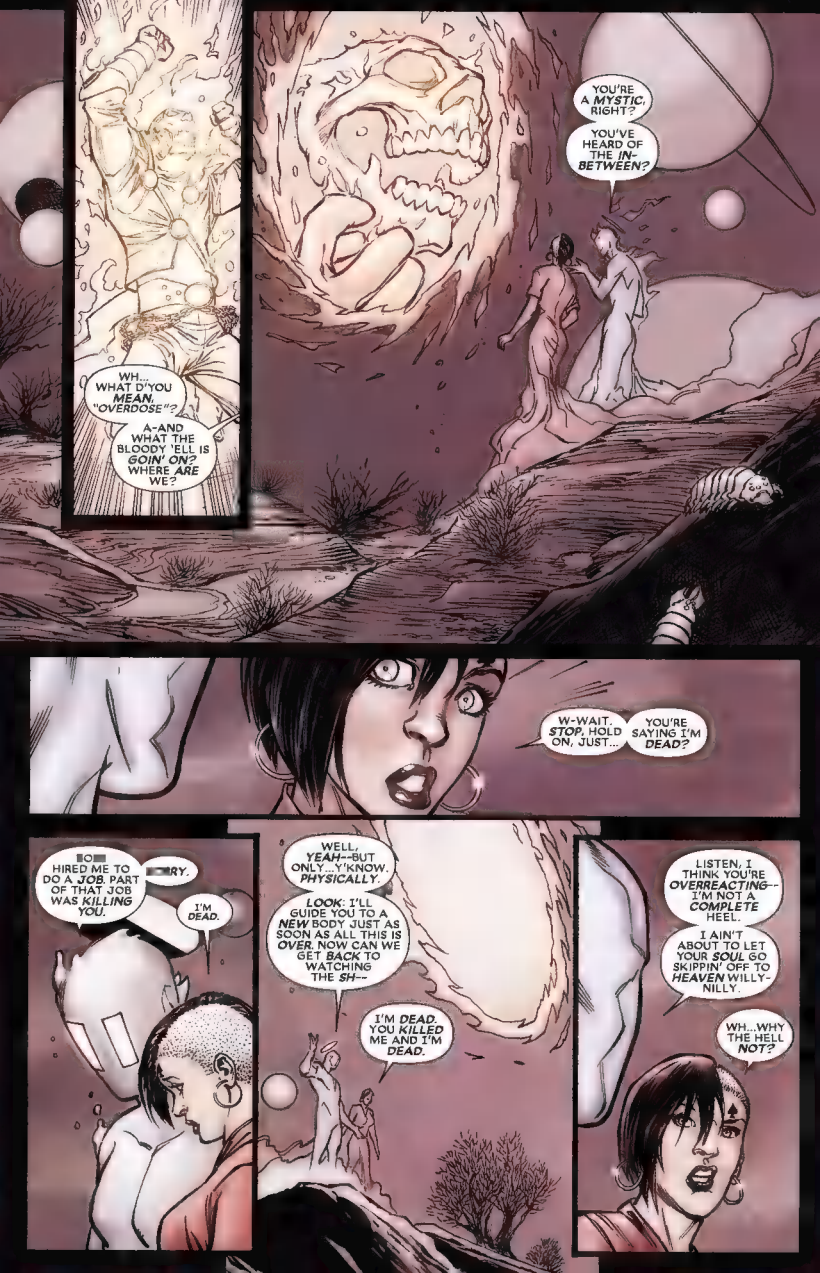
S-SOD OFF!
THBUP
AAH!
FZZZK
I...I SEE YOU, YOU #%$$-ER!
YOU'RE...
WH... WHAT ARE YOU?
MISTER ELEVEN. AT YOUR SERVICE.
Y...YOU CAN CHANGE BODIES?
LITTLE TRICK OF MINE. FUNNY THING...

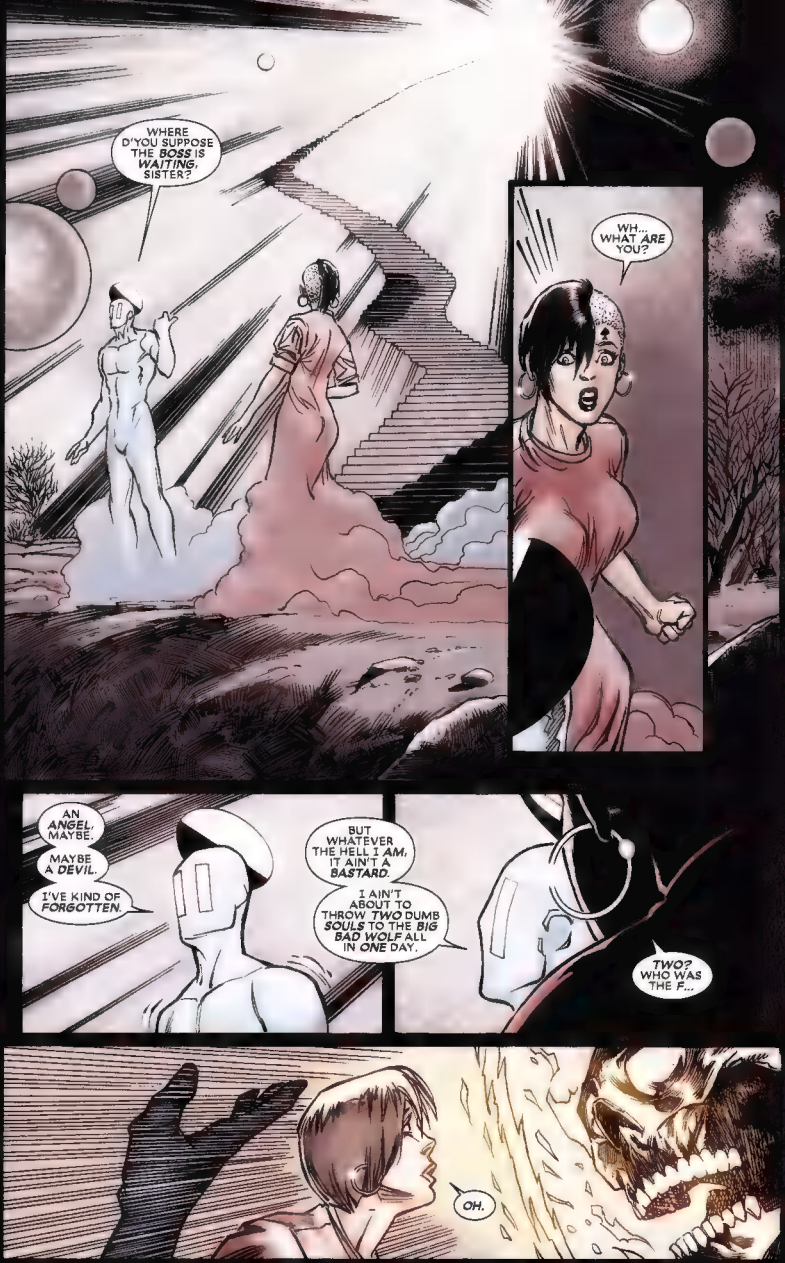
RRRRRRAAAAAA!
"...DON'T THINK I MENTIONED IT TO DAN."
I... I KNOW WHO YOUR MASTER IS. 'S ALL OVER THE GRAPEVINE.
PFFT. I'M A FREE AGENT, SISTER. GAVE UP ON MASTERS A COUPLE MILLENIA BACK. IT'S JUST A JOB.
BOLLOCKS. YOU'RE UP TO YOUR BLEEDIN' WHISKERS IN SCHEMING FOR A HARP-TWANGIN' ARSEHOLE.
IT'S NEVER "JUST A JOB" FOR THE LIKES OF Z--
HEY!
DON'T SAY HIS NAME.
LAST THING YOU WANT'S HIM PAYIN' ATTENTION.
LOOK... CUT ME SOME SLACK, OKAY?
I'M ONLY INTO THIS $#!% 'COS HE'LL TEAR MY SOUL IN HALF IF HE DON'T GET WHAT HE WANTS. THAT'S KINDA HIS PARTY TRICK.
WHAT HE WANTS IS DAN, AND WHAT HE DON'T WANT IS YOU WARNIN' THE KID OFF.
SO.
NOTHING PERSONAL.

DON'T... NNNNF... TALK...WITH YOUR MOUTH FULL!
SKRUTCH
NKK
HNUK
KLADOOOM
C-COME THEN. WHELP. TAKE WHAT IS YOURS. JAP. ABSORB THE SPIRIT.
TO THE VICTOR THE SPOILS...

I...I DON'T NEED YOUR POWER.
HA..IS NONSENSE. YOU ARE CRAVING IT...
IS NO MORE THAN YOU DESERVE, HERR KETCH...YOU HAVE BEEN DENIED YOUR NEEDS MOST CRUEL--
O-QUIET.
WHAT HARM WILL IT DO YOU, EH? I AM DYING ANYWAY. WHY WASTE SUCH ENERG--
QUIET! NNF...B-BE SILENT AND DIE!
AHH...THEN IT IS FEAR. NEIN? THE FEAR THAT YOU ARE TOO WEAK TO REMAIN IN CONTROL.
IT IS AN UGLY THING, COWARDICE...
RRRRRRRRRRR I SAID--
BE SILENT!
HAHAHAHA
ZZAAAAAAAAAAK
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

VVORB
AAAA! NNNRRAAAA!
MARY... M-MAAAARY!
C...CAN'T HOLD IT!
CAN'T HOLD IT!
D-DID IT BEFORE, MARY...
EXORCISE ME!

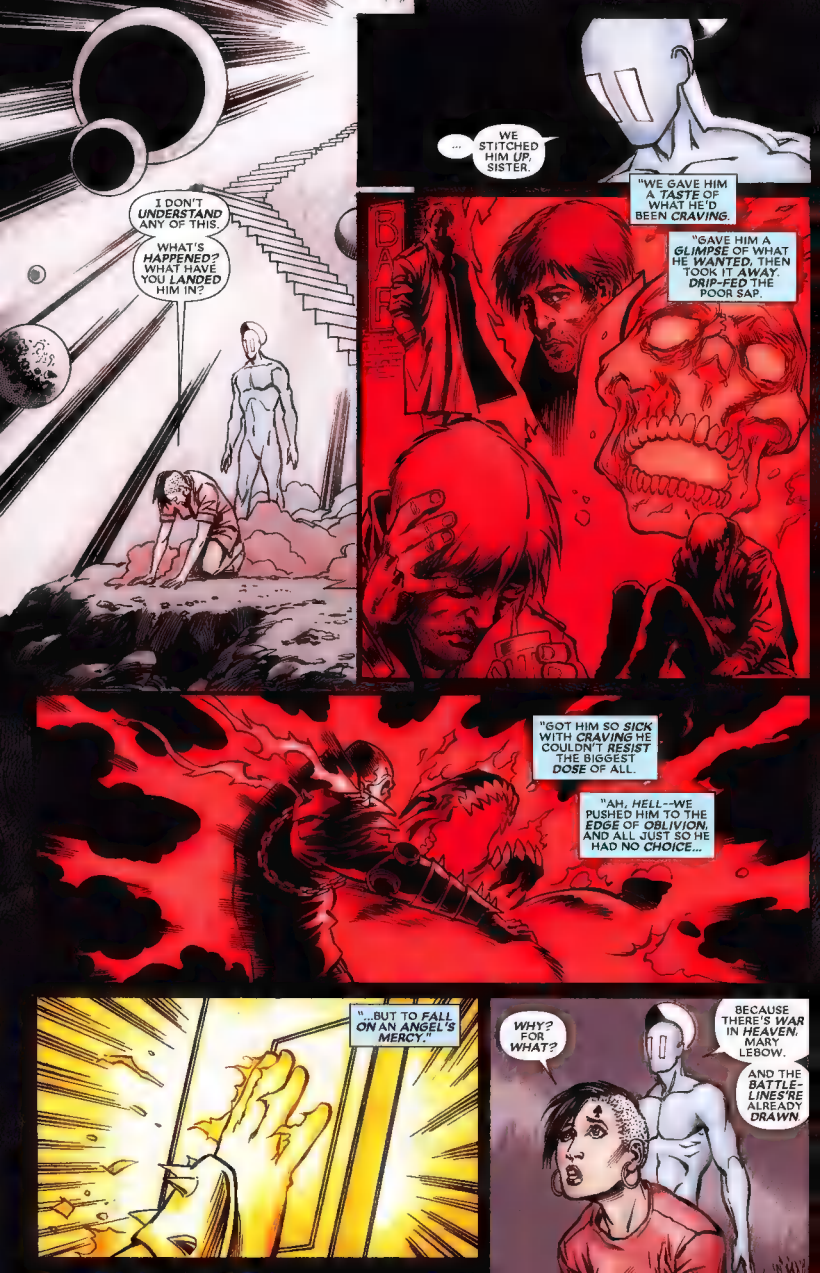

WH... WHAT D'YOU MEAN, "OVERDOSE"?
A-AND WHAT THE BLOODY 'ELL IS GOIN' ON? WHERE ARE WE?
YOU'RE A MYSTIC, RIGHT?
YOU'VE HEARD OF THE IN-BETWEEN?
W-WAIT. STOP, HOLD ON, JUST...
YOU'RE SAYING I'M DEAD?
[illegible]O[illegible] HIRED ME TO DO A JOB. PART OF THAT JOB WAS KILLING YOU.
[illegible]RY.
I'M DEAD.
WELL, YEAH--BUT ONLY...Y'KNOW. PHYSICALLY.
LOOK: I'LL GUIDE YOU TO A NEW BODY JUST AS SOON AS ALL THIS IS OVER. NOW CAN WE GET BACK TO WATCHING THE SH--
I'M DEAD. YOU KILLED ME AND I'M DEAD.
LISTEN, I THINK YOU'RE OVERREACTING-- I'M NOT A COMPLETE HEEL.
I AIN'T ABOUT TO LET YOUR SOUL GO SKIPPIN' OFF TO HEAVEN WILLY-NILLY.
WH...WHY THE HELL NOT?


WHERE D'YOU SUPPOSE THE BOSS IS WAITING, SISTER?
WH... WHAT ARE YOU?
AN ANGEL, MAYBE.
MAYBE A DEVIL.
I'VE KIND OF FORGOTTEN.
BUT WHATEVER THE HELL I AM, IT AIN'T A BASTARD.
I AIN'T ABOUT TO THROW TWO DUMB SOULS TO THE BIG BAD WOLF ALL IN ONE DAY.
TWO? WHO WAS THE F...
OH.

AAA
AAAA
AAAAA
BE STILL, CHILD.
BE STILL! THANKS OF THE ONE WHOSE BODY CAUSE YOU HAVE TAKEN!
WH... WH...
BE STILL! IN THE PEACE OF ZADKIEL.
TAKE HEED, CHILD. YOUR REFERENCE IS TAKING HOLD OF IT BURNS.
DAMN THEATRICS...

YOU MUST GIVE IT TO ME.
N-NNNN--
WHY SUCH FEAR, CHAOS SON? HAVE NOT THE TOKEN FOR STARGORMES?..
PERHAPS AS YES... WONDER YOU HAVE SLAIN YOUR BROTHER?
"YOUR FOOL SMILING HAS MADE YOU WILLING TO A DEVIL-FIEND FOR MATERIAL GAIN.
"I ASK NO SUCH PRICE, DANIEL.
"I AM NO DEMON. I SEEK NOT YOUR SOUL WITH THE HUNGER OF THE GLUTTON NOR THE DELIGHT OF THE SADIST BUT THE CONCERN OF A FATHER."
I WOULD SAVE IT, DANIEL. I WOULD GIVE IT PURE.
WHATEVER YOU FEED YOUR ESSENCE WOULD RESTORE TO HEAVEN.
AND IN RETURN...
IN RETURN I'LL GIVE THAT WHICH YOU HAVE ALREADY BEGUN.
GATHER WITHIN YOU ALL THE SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE. SUBDUE THEM DOWN DEEP TO SAVE THE SOULS OF THEIR HOSTS
JUST AS I SHALL SAVE YOURS.

SIMPLY MAKE YOUR MARK.
... HOW?
NO! DON'T TRUST HIM! DON'T LIS--
HE CAN'T HEAR YOU.


I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS.
WHAT'S HAPPENED? WHAT HAVE YOU LANDED HIM IN?
... WE STITCHED HIM UP, SISTER.
"WE GAVE HIM A TASTE OF WHAT HE'D BEEN CRAVING.
"GAVE HIM A GLIMPSE OF WHAT HE WANTED, THEN TOOK IT AWAY. DRIP-FED THE POOR SAP.
"GOT HIM SO SICK WITH CRAVING HE COULDN'T RESIST THE BIGGEST DOSE OF ALL.
"AH, HELL--WE PUSHED HIM TO THE EDGE OF OBLIVION, AND ALL JUST SO HE HAD NO CHOICE...
"...BUT TO FALL ON AN ANGEL'S MERCY."
WHY? FOR WHAT?
BECAUSE THERE'S WAR IN HEAVEN, MARY LEBOW.
AND THE BATTLE-LINES'RE ALREADY DRAWN

THE BOSS. HE... HE'S LAYING SIEGE TO THE THRONE.
HE'S GOT AMBITIONS ON THE TOP JOB, AND HE KNOWS BETTER THAN ANYONE WHAT IT'LL TAKE TO BREAK THE STALEMATE.
"THE SPIRITS.
"THE ANCIENT WEAPONS OF HEAVENLY POWER.
"BACK IN HIS HANDS, UNDER HIS CONTROL, ON HIS TERMS.
"ALL HE NEEDED WAS A PUPPET DOWN ON EARTH, TO COLLECT THEM IN HIS NAME.'
AAAAAAAA
YOU!
AH, CRAP...
I DEMAND MY REWARD, TURNCOAT! I DID EVERYTHING THAT WAS ASKED!
H-HE WAS PART OF THIS 'N ALL?
CAN'T CATCH A FISH WITHOUT A MAGGOT.

I SWALLOWED THE SPIRITS! I ALLOWED THE HINDI-BITCH TO ESCAPE! I PERSUADED THE WHELP TO ABSORB MY STRENGTH!
I WAS PROMISED A REWARD!
YOU GOT YOUR REWARD, OVERBITE. THE BOSS REBUILT YOUR DAMN RACE, SAME AS YOU ASKED.
GO HAUNT A SEWER SOMEPLACE.
NRAAAAAA!
I WAS PROMISED A NEW BODY! I WAS PROMISED TO BE HUMAAAN!
YOU WILL TAKE ME TO YOUR MASTER!
NO DICE. HE'S KINDA DISTRACTED JUST NOW.
YOU AND HIM GOT THAT IN COMMON.
HHHH?
THWUMP
GOIN' DOWN.
SNAP
WAS IST--?

AAAAAAAAAAA
MUCH OBLIGED.
SKIP THE BOLLOCKS, MATE. WHY DID YOU KEEP ME HERE, 'STEADA LETTING ME GO UP OR DOWN LIKE ANYONE ELSE?
THE TRUTH.
...
THERE'S A TIME COMING, WHEN...WHEN ANYONE LINKED TO...Y'KNOW... OCCULTISM, SPOOKINESS, HEAVEN AND HELL—ALL THAT $#!%...
...THEY'RE GONNA BE IN TROUBLE.
PEOPLE LIKE US, MARY... PEOPLE WHO AIN'T NORMAL.
WE'RE GONNA CATCH THE FALLOUT, AND WE GOTTA STICK TOGETHER.
SO...LET'S GO FIND YOU A NEW BODY, HUH?
I...I DON'T GET IT. FALLOUT FROM WHAT?
HA.
FROM HIM.

THERE NOW, YOUR SOUL IS SAFE, CHILD.
SAFE IN MY KEEPING.
I...I HEAR YOU...
...I HEAR YOU IN MY HEART.
ARISE, LOYAL KNIGHT. ARISE, PURIFIED IN THE SERVICE OF ZADKIEL.
ARISE AND FULFILL YOUR SACRED BOND.
SEEK YOU THE SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE, WHEREVER THEY MAY BE.
DRINK DEEP OF THEIR POWER, BUT FEEL NOT THE SHAME OF THEFT WHEN THEY RESIST YOU-- FOR IN VICTORY YOU REDEEM THEIR VERY SOULS.
YOU HAVE THE SANCTION OF HEAVEN, CHILD.
YOU MAY... MEDICATE AT WILL.
AND YOU HAVE YOUR ULTIMATE GOAL.

LIBERATE HIM.
LIBERATE HIM FROM THE BURNING HORROR THAT LURKS IN HIS BREAST.
FWOOMPH
SAVE YOUR BROTHER, CHILD. SAVE HIM WITH FIRE AND FURY.

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